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Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEA-10 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 DRC-01 /165 W
---------- 116361
R 301630Z OCT 73
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3564
INFO USINT ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USUN NEW YORK 593

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, TS/ XF
SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA'S REMARKS ON CEASEFIRE

REF: TUNIS 6106

1. AT CONCLUSION FO AID EL FITR CEREMONY OCT 27 AT CARTHAGE PALACE, PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA MADE STATEMENT TO TUNISIAN JOURNALISTS IN WHICH HE COMMENTED ON CEASEFIRE AND PROSPECTS FOR PEACE. MAIN POINTS HE MADE WERE: HEROISM OF ARAB SOLDIERS NOT ENOUGH, WHAT COUNTS IS FINAL COUTCOME, THERE HAD BEEN LITTLE CONSULTATION AMONG ARAB STATES ON BATTLE PLAN; SO FAR EVENTS WERE NOT ENCOURAGING AND HE NOT OPTIMISTIC OVER OUTCOME PARTICULARLY AFTER OBSERVERS SENT TO CEASEFIRE AREA, WHICH HE SAID COULD RESULT IN RETURN OF SUPERPOWER DOMINANCE IN ME, ESPECIALLY SOVIET UNION.

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2. THUS, ACCORDING PRESS EXCERPTS (WHICH ALL WE HAVE

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AVAILABLE), BOURGUIBA REPORTEDLY SAID ITER ALIA THAT HE HOPED
OUTCOME OF WAR WOU
J BE HAPPY ONE IN SPITE OF CONTRADICTORY
REPORTS HE HAD RECEIVED. HE PRAISED HEROISM OF EGYPTIANS,
SYRIAN AND PALESTIANIAN FIGHTERS BUT SAID WHAT COUNTS IS FINAL
RESULT. SPEAKING IN FIRST PERSON PLURAL, BOURGUIBA SAID HE
WAS SURPRISED BY WAR SINCE THERE HAD BEEN NO MEETING TO CONSULT
ON COMMON POLICY, NOTING THAT ONE OF COUNTRIES IN FIGHTING
(SYRIA) HAD DECLARED ITS SURPRISE AT ACCEPTANCE OF CEASEFIRE

BY ITS PARTNER.

3. HE SAID THESE METHODS ARE NEITHER HEALTHY NOR ENCOURAGING.
"THEY LEAVE ME NOT VERY OPTIMISTIC REGARDING THE OUTCOME, ABOVE
ALL AFTER THE SENDING OF OBSERVERS TO THE CEASEFIRE LINES,
WHICH IS LIKELY TO PLACE THE ARAB COUNTRIES AGAIN UNDER THE
YOKE OF THE GREAT POWERS AND PARTICULARLY THE SOVIET UNION."

4. HE WENT ON TO CITE CASE OF TUNISIA IN ITS FIGHT FOR
INDEPENDENCE FROM FRANCE AS EXAMPLE FOR ARABS TO FOLLOW,
OTTLE WITH ISRAEL.

5. COMMENT: THIS IS ONLY PUBLIC STATEMENT BOURGUIBA HAS MADE
ON ME SITUATION SINCE CEASEFIRE ESTABLISHED. ASSUME DEPARTMENT
HAS FBIS REPORT OF FULL TEXT SINCE REMARKS WERE CARRIED ON
RADIO SAME DAY. EXCERPTS WERE PUBLISHED IN LOCAL PRESS OCT 29.
WE HAVE ALREADY HEARD A NUMBER OF TUNISIAN REACTIONS TO
BOURGUIBA'S STATEMENT, SOME OF WHICH HAVE BEEN UNHAPPY WITH
HIS IMPLICIT CRITICISM OF EGYPT'S ACTIONS.
AS IT GOES. IT IS INTERESTING. BOURGUIBA IS TAKING LINE
WHICH IN SOME RESPECTS IS IN KEEPING WITH POSITION OF
QADDHAFI AND POSSIBLY BOUMEDIENE AS WELL.
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TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, MARR, TS, XF, XI, UR, SY, EG, IS, (BOURGUIBA, HABIB)
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